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DEPARTMENT FOR G/TIP, G, INL, DRL, EUR/PGI, EUR/SE

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SUBJECT: TIP in Turkey: Media Attention from April 16 to May 31, 2006

¶1. (U) Post is instituting a new summary format, which we hope will make the TIP-related media report more accessible. We welcome feedback.

¶2. (U) Summary: During the six-week reporting period, media attention on trafficking in persons (TIP) focused on several stories compiled and summarized below. The Turkish National Police (TNP) continued its crack down on human traffickers through several operations, including arresting a female police chief and two policemen for alleged involvement in human trafficking rings. End Summary.

Police Operations

¶3. (U) Media reported on several police crackdowns on trafficking, including:

-- April 18 dailies reported police captured two traffickers, including one woman, in Istanbul. They rescued six underage Turkish girls, two of whom reportedly had fled the Taksim Youth center, an Istanbul orphanage for adolescents. The judicial process is ongoing.

-- Police arrested a woman police chief during a so-called Pink Line Operation against a human trafficking ring in Antalya. According to April 26 dailies, she allegedly received \$1000 per week in return for turning a blind eye to gang activities. The Antalya police detained 41 people, including 11 public servants and 26 prostitutes. The judicial process is ongoing.

-- The semi-official Anatolian News Agency reported May 5 that the Ankara Police carried out an operation and arrested four traffickers. Traffickers lured women primarily from Moldova, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Six trafficking victims were placed in shelters. The judicial process is ongoing.

-- "Radikal" reported that Mugla Police detained 15 people in Fethiye, Mugla for human trafficking on May 16. Further details were not available.

-- "Sabah" on May 26 reported that Ardahan Police cracked down on a prostitution gang and arrested trafficker Niyazi Yildirim and six other gang members. Police continued to detain Yildirim and two policemen who were allegedly tipping the gang off to police

investigations. The article did not provide details on the victims.

Other Developments

¶4. (U) The media covered a variety of other trafficking related stories:

-- "Hurriyet" on April 18 quoted a provincial police chief who suggested a tax on prostitution revenues. He calculated that organizers transferred abroad around \$3.8 million earned through prostitution per year. The proposal of Mutlu Celik, the local police chief in the tourist area of Urgup, created controversy.

-- According to April 20 dailies, prosecutors opened a case against four human traffickers, including a woman, for forcing 23 Turkish women into prostitution. The Istanbul Police earlier cracked down on this gang with its so-called Barbie Operation.

-- April 20 dailies reported that Interior Minister Abdulkadir Aksu traveled to Baku to talk to Azeri officials about terrorism, organized crime, human trafficking, illegal immigration and arms trafficking.

-- April 24 mass-appeal daily "Hurriyet" and April 25 "Sabah" carried items on a UN Office for Drugs and Crime report that stated that Turkey was one of ten major destination countries for human trafficking. The report noted that in 2005, 360 people were put on trial for human trafficking in Turkey.

-- Anatolian News Agency reported on May 4 that Ukrainian Elena Temshewko fled from traffickers and took refuge with the Alanya police. After she received a medical check-up, a judge ruled for

her deportation because she overstayed her visa. She was deported.

-- On May 8 Islamist "Yeni Safak" referred to 2005 TNP Smuggling and Organized Crime Department statistics. In the past two years, approximately 6000 foreign women were deported for prostitution. In 2005, 2113 were deported; in the first six months of 2006, the figure was 301.

-- Left-of-center "Radikal" on May 16 reported that the EU granted 250,000 Euros for a project called "Global Migration in Eastern Mediterranean and Eurasia: Its Security and Human Rights Threats to Europe." Middle East Technical University Sociology Department Prof. Ayse Ayata and her team will conduct the study in coordination with experts in Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Egypt and Georgia.